

INTRODUCTION: THE GENESIS OF “ANAL” AND “SEXUAL”

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In 1916, Lou Andreas-Salomé’s essay “Anal” und “Sexual” appeared in the fourth issue of *Imago*. It is the penultimate essay of a series of articles that Andreas-Salomé published in the journal between the years of 1913 and 1921, and it is the centerpiece of what might be described as a trilogy of Andreas-Salomé’s psychoanalytic theory, including also ‘The Woman Type’ (1914) and ‘Narcissism as a Double Tendency’ (1921). The essay is an ambitious attempt to understand the impact of the repression of anal sexuality on modern western civilization, from the effects of this ‘first prohibition’ (1977[1916], p. 1) on the development of the individual to its broader cultural ramifications, including its role in the production of affects such as disgust and contempt. Parts I and II of the essay explore the role of anal repression in subject-formation, focusing on how the infant’s body is territorialized by its parents to divide and rank its orifices and drives – a process through which the anus becomes associated with dirt, blackness, and death, and ‘the genital area becomes the ambassador of life’ (p. 14). Part III then turns to

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unpack the implications of Freud's theory of narcissism for debates about the role of the libido in early psychoanalytic theory. Putting her finger on the subtle difference between Freud's earlier use of narcissism as a perversion characterized by autoerotic self-love and his later re-elaboration of it as libidinal force that complements 'the egoism of the instinct of self-preservation,' Andreas-Salomé closes her essay with a confutation of Carl Jung's and Alfred Adler's theories of the subject, contending that narcissism is 'an enduring component of every stage of development' (p. 38).

Freud described "'Anal'" and "'Sexual'" as 'the best' of Andreas-Salomé's psychoanalytic writings (Andreas-Salomé and Freud, 1966, p. 36). Praising its 'incredible subtlety' and 'impressive gift of making a synthesis out of' a wide range of material, he forwarded the piece directly to the journal editors upon receiving it from her in November 1915. Not only did Freud immediately recognize the value of Andreas-Salomé's work, but he would also go on to adjust his own sexual theory in response, re-elaborating his understanding of anal sexuality the following year in 'On Transformations in Instinct as Exemplified in Anal Eroticism' (1917) and adding a large footnote to the revised 1920 edition of *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905). In the footnote Freud refers to "'Anal'" and "'Sexual'" as 'a paper which has given us a very much deeper understanding of the significance of anal eroticism' by 'show[ing] how the history of the first prohibition which a child comes across – the prohibition against getting pleasure from anal activity and its products – has a decisive effect on his whole development' (Freud, 1905, p. 187).

The significance of "'Anal'" and "'Sexual'" within the history of psychoanalysis is not confined to its influence on Freud, however. Rather, it unfolds through Andreas-Salomé's complication of psychoanalytic understandings of the role of anal eroticism in sexual development and in culture more broadly. While the piece is framed as a defense of Freudian sexual theory, it makes its own series of interventions in the field, emphasizing the persisting effects of anal repression beyond Freud's emphasis on pathological regressions, devalorizing sexual difference by highlighting how it arises through the negation of the anus as a site of sameness, and insisting on the productive power of repression.

Despite its impact on Freud, as well as its far-reaching implications for psychoanalytic theory, Andreas-Salomé's essay has never been translated into English.¹ This special issue presents the first English translation of "'Anal'" and "'Sexual'" followed by a series of short responses to the text. These responses, undertaken by scholars working at the intersections of psychoanalytic theory and a range of other disciplines, highlight Andreas-Salomé's relevance for fields such as sexuality studies, Black studies, aesthetics, philosophy, postcolonial studies, and

1. The essay has previously been translated into Italian (Andreas-Salomé, 1977[1916]), French (Andreas-Salomé, 1980[1916]), Spanish (Andreas-Salomé, 1982[1916]), and Portuguese (Andreas-Salomé, 2003[1916]), among other languages.

affect theory. In what follows, we offer a short introduction to Andreas-Salomé's essay, narrating its genesis and tracing connections with recent work in queer theory and critical race studies. "Anal" and "Sexual" demands much more unpacking than we are able to accomplish here. We can only hope that its translation into English will inspire a renewed interest in this rich and intricate essay, which confronts many of the most pressing issues of theory and criticism today.

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The origins of "Anal" and "Sexual" begin with Andreas-Salomé's discovery of psychoanalysis and her encounter with Freud in 1911. The first recorded meeting between the two thinkers occurred in September of that year at the third International Psychoanalytic Congress in Weimar, which Andreas-Salomé attended alongside the Swedish psychiatrist Poul Carl Bjerre.² The following year, she wrote to Freud asking his permission to join the meetings of his Wednesday Society in Vienna. By that time, she had already begun to develop her own sexual theory, having published her study *The Erotic* in 1910.³ After meeting Freud at the age of 51, however, she decided to dedicate herself 'vehemently' to the study of psychoanalysis, writing to him on 27 September 1912: 'Dear Professor, since attending the Weimar congress last autumn, the study of psychoanalysis has continued to preoccupy me, and the further I penetrate into it the more absorbed I become' (Andreas-Salomé & Freud, 1966, p. 7). Leaving little space for rejection, she continues, 'You will allow me to approach you, and attend your lectures, and also to be admitted to your Wednesday evenings, won't you? The sole aim of my visit to Vienna is to devote myself further to every aspect of this matter' (p. 7). Freud promptly responded, granting her access to his working circle, and adding that 'I have already interpreted your attendance at the Weimar Congress as a favorable omen' (p. 7).

A month later, Andreas-Salomé moved from Göttingen, where she had been living for the past 10 years, to Vienna. Over the course of her six-month stay, she would become an integral participant in Freud's Wednesday colloquia, also attending his Saturday lectures at the University of Vienna. Freud's attachment was immediate: when she did not appear at his lecture on 9 November 1912 (just two weeks after her arrival), he wrote to tell her that he had 'missed' her and that he had stared 'spellbound at the place which had been kept for' her (Andreas-Salomé & Freud, 1966, p. 11).

2. It is possible that Andreas-Salomé had already encountered Freud in Vienna in the 1890s (Martin, 1991, p. 191).

3. *Die Erotik* is not exactly pre-psychoanalytic, as Andreas-Salomé had encountered some of Freud's early writings through her friend Viktor Tausk prior to its composition.

Andreas-Salomé's stay in Vienna coincided with a tumultuous period in Freud's professional life. When she arrived, Jung was still president of the Psychoanalytic Association, and Adler had only recently stopped attending Freud's weekly colloquia in Vienna. Within the next two years, however, Freud would split with both Jung and Adler on the basis of irreconcilable differences about the nature of the libido and the unconscious, respectively. Freud's anxiety about these mounting tensions is nowhere more apparent than in his letter to Andreas-Salomé about her absence on 9 November: seemingly insecure about the fact that she had attended Adler's lecture the previous week, he expresses relief that her 'visit to the camp of "masculine protest" played no part' in her decision not to attend his own lecture (Andreas-Salomé & Freud, 1966, p. 11). These conflicts are relevant to the genesis of "'Anal'" and "'Sexual'" because one of the driving forces of the essay is an attempt to make sense of the conceptual differences between the approaches of Freud, Jung, and Adler with respect to key concepts such as sexuality, drive, libido, and narcissism.

In placing 'anal' at the forefront of her own theory of subject-formation, Andreas-Salomé makes two important metapsychological interventions: (1) in response to Jung's desexualized and monistic theory of the libido as a generalized psychic force, she firmly positions an ambivalent sexuality at the ontological root of human experience; (2) foregrounding the importance of the unconscious as a reservoir of psychic energy connected not only (as Adler would have it) to the repression of prohibited sexual acts and areas, but as a space where such prohibitions generate positive re-elaborations, she insists upon the productive nature of repression. Eschewing a masculine fear of sexual profundity in favor of a confrontation with the dark recesses of the body, Andreas-Salomé approaches the 'anal' as a space whose analysis will not only bring greater understanding of the generative qualities of the libido and the unconscious but will shed light on the origins of subjectivity itself. Remarkably disinterested in linking anal sexuality specifically to homosexuality (in the essay's only allusion to homosexuality, it is suggested that, given the fundamental similarity and proximity of the anal and the genital zones, 'the regressions of anal-erotic types have ample somatic support'⁴), "'Anal'" and "'Sexual'" understands the anal area as a site of profound corporeal sameness (p. 28). The prohibition of anal pleasure, the essay argues, is formative of *all subjects*, whose erotic life is marked by a pulsating desire to return to a pre-genital state in which 'I' is less easily distinguished from 'world.'

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Andreas-Salomé kept a detailed diary during her stay in Vienna, taking notes during the weekly lectures, and sketching her own theoretical diagrams of

4. On Andreas-Salomé's later views on homosexuality and her departure from Freud on this point, see note 7.

psychoanalytic concepts. The picture that emerges from her *Freud Journal* (1965 [1912–13]) is that of an autonomous, motivated intellectual who, although she had rapidly accepted Freud's sexual ontology, was entirely comfortable challenging aspects of his theory. Of particular concern to her was Freud's representation of the relationship between the ego and sexual drives as one of unsolvable conflict and his understanding of the unconscious in terms of repression and inhibition.⁵ Where Freud saw the healthy ego as the necessary usurper of the unconscious, Andreas-Salomé believed that the ego and the unconscious were able to maintain, in and through their tension, a productive and generative relationship. Her reconfiguration of these key Freudian concepts would inform her approach to anal sexuality as more than a developmental stage that must be surpassed for healthy sexuality to form. Instead, she frames the prohibition on anal pleasure as a never-completed repression that haunts all psyches, and the anal stage as a phase in which 'semi-exiled drives' become 'dispersed all over the body's surface,' holding the door open for future (nongenital) pleasures and expressions of creativity (p. 31).

Close attention to the *Freud Journal* suggests that the seeds were planted for "Anal" and "Sexual" within a brief four-day period. The first signs of Andreas-Salomé's interest in anal sexuality appear in her notes on Viktor Tausk's course on 'Sex and Ego' on 26 November 1912 and on his talk on the inhibition of artists the following day at the Wednesday colloquium (Andreas-Salomé, 1965, pp. 56–8). Biddy Martin has stressed the importance of Andreas-Salomé's connection to Tausk, one of Freud's closest collaborators at the time, highlighting the particular significance of his concept of 'elaboration' to her challenge to Freud's developmental logic.⁶ According to Martin, Andreas-Salomé turned to Tausk to cultivate a less pathologizing conception of 'regression' than Freud at the time, as well as to deactivate the primacy of the rational, healthy, heterosexual subject.⁷ Where Freud had framed the return to the primitive, the irrational, and the infantile, as well as people's need for religion, as 'compensatory

5. If Freud himself developed a more complex understanding of these concepts in the following years, this in part is due to Salomé's engagement with his theories.

6. It is worth noting that Freud's developmental emphasis was a somewhat later acquisition. The section of *Three Essays* on 'the Phases of Development of the Sexual Organization' was added in 1915, for example, the year before Andreas-Salomé published "'Anal" and "Sexual",' making it all the more striking that Andreas-Salomé questions this tendency.

7. In *Mein Dank an Freud* (1931), Andreas-Salomé explicitly challenges Freud's views on homosexuality, writing that while 'you [Freud] assert that it must be regarded as pathological and in certain circumstances curable [...] I think the positive dimension has not been sufficiently emphasized, the advantage that [homoerotic types] have over the regular heterosexual' (p. 29, translation ours). As Andreas-Salomé goes on to argue, in 'hesitating' to conform to heterosexuality, the homoerotic 'carries with him something of the fundamental erotic character, something that otherwise only early eros has' and that people normally 'forfeit' when they fuse themselves into a heterosexual unity.

formations' that should be renounced in 'normal, rational adulthood,' she understood such phenomena as positive 'elaborations' of desires and energies emergent from that vast reservoir of libido that Freud called 'primary narcissism' (Martin, 1991, p. 208).

Tausk's exposition of Freud's idea that civilization is characterized by an irreparable fracture between ego and sexuality is important for Andreas-Salomé insofar as it becomes the occasion to distinguish her view of sexuality from that of Freud (Andreas-Salomé, 1965, p. 56). While, for Freud, the demands of the sexual drive necessarily clash with the demands of civilization, leading to the 'constant attenuation' of the sex drive in favor of the ego drive, Andreas-Salomé views the relation between ego drive and sex drive less in conflictual terms: 'the ego, which is manifest in culture, must find in it directly the forms in which it will fully discharge its instinctual energy' (p. 56). For her, the ego drives and the sex drives are not oppositional forces. Rather, they enter into a relationship of mutual reinforcement that functions to balance the demands of the libido with the egoic demands of culture and sociality – a point that prefigures (if not directly informs) Freud's collapse of the opposition between ego and sexual drives into a unified 'life' drive in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920). The gravitational pull of sex toward the ego and the ego toward sex arises out of their shared origins in that primordial energetic force that Freud termed 'primary narcissism,' a force that continues to act and determine the relationship that ego and sex establish with one other across one's life: 'That which constitutes narcissism and which undoubtedly accompanies us all our lives in a mysterious way,' Andreas-Salomé writes in her notes on Tausk's 'Sex and Ego' lecture, 'must also come again and again to be the *creative* element, i.e., the natural and at the same time the spiritual goal of every human development, the *unity* of sex and ego' (1965, pp. 56–7).

In rethinking the formal relation between sex and ego, Andreas-Salomé engages Tausk's identification of a correlation between anal eroticism and artistic production – the subject of Tausk's talk at the Wednesday colloquium on 27 November 1912. Tausk had traced the origins of anal eroticism to the pleasure derived from the corporeal expulsion of objects – excrements – which are both parts of us and foreign to us, comparing this process to artistic production, in that in both these processes 'we conceive of our own work' as 'something which has become objectified, as if it were our own self' (1965, p. 57). Artistic production thus becomes, in Andreas-Salomé's reading of Tausk, an elaboration (rather than a sublimation) of a primordial sexual energy that can be first located in the process of expulsion/retention of excrements from our bodies. What Andreas-Salomé appears to find particularly appealing in Tausk's parallel between artistic production and anal eroticism is his identification of a persistence of anal eroticism in adult life. If in his essay 'Character and Anal Erotism' (1908) Freud had described anal sexuality as an initial step toward genital sexuality, framing the perpetuation of the anal drive in adulthood either in terms of pathological regression (e.g. homosexual inversion) or of sublimation into character traits (e.g. parsimony, avarice), Andreas-Salomé's reading of Tausk's lecture opens up a third possibility: that

repression and release do not only occur through the dialectic of the normal and the pathological, nor also only through sublimation, but through an active release of sexual energy around other parts of the body (p. 57).

Three days after Tausk's intervention on anal eroticism at the Wednesday colloquium, Freud himself readdressed the question of 'anality' in his Saturday lecture on 'Disgust and Sexuality.' In her notes on Freud's lecture, Andreas-Salomé begins by observing that Freud's 1908 essay 'Character and Anal Erotism' had 'too superficially' linked the emergence of the anal character 'with the punishment applied to the anal region itself,' a point possibly made by Freud himself in the lecture (Andreas-Salomé, 1965, p. 59). As a corrective to this, Freud's lecture is said to explore the role of the repression of the anal zone in the production of sexual subjectivity more generally. Observing that 'the most difficult problems are interrelated [...] in anal erotism in general,' Freud is then said to trace the emergence of 'primary disgust' to the prohibition of anal pleasure in childhood (p. 59). 'It is interesting,' Andreas-Salomé jots down in her notes, 'that the disgust appropriate and healthy in all of us – the only "healthy and self-evident disgust" lies here at the real point of origin of the individual' (p. 59).

Two things in particular appear to have intrigued Andreas-Salomé about Freud's lecture on 30 November 1912: (1) the notion that disgust, as well as its attendant feelings of shame and contempt, are not 'natural' responses to sexuality, but are instilled by the parents through negative reactions to the child's anal activities: 'this first, inescapable disgust is absent from sexuality from the start,' Andreas-Salomé writes in her notebook; 'For disgust arises within anality, through its repression (by training)' (Andreas-Salomé, 1965, p. 59); and (2) the possibility that the repression of anal pleasure could have more sweeping implications than those first underlined by Freud in the *Three Essays* – that it might lie at the very 'origin' of human development, impacting the way in which we distinguish ourselves from the world. 'Here then is a problem,' she concludes the entry, alluding to the implications of the theory for the psychoanalytic understanding of sexuality more broadly: 'it is as if normal human sexuality matured only at this distance from excretion and the inorganic' (p. 60). Put otherwise, it is through a disidentification with something that was once part of us – excrement, which, along with the anal zone more broadly, we are taught to repulse – that the ego, and with it, (genital) sexuality, arises.

Just one month after her arrival in Vienna, Andreas-Salomé thus zeroes in on anality as the key to the psychoanalytic investigation of subject-formation. In her notes on Tausk's and Freud's lectures, we can witness the beginnings of what would become her most original contribution to sexual theory: the idea that the question of anal sexuality – this so-called most 'reviled' form of sexuality (p. 19) – stands at the heart of the relationship between the sex drives and the ego drives, as well as, more broadly, the relationship between sex and civilization. What happens to anal eroticism once the body of the infant is territorialized by its parents, as it realizes that the products coming from its anus produce a fundamental displeasure? What are the cultural consequences of the elevation of the genitals

over the anus in this crucial stage? Why does the origin of sexuality in humans lie – differently than in other animals – in the distancing of the human subject from ‘excretion’ and ‘the inorganic’? Why is disgust the key affect in this process of discrimination between the human and the nonhuman? And how might the repression of the anus as a potential erogenous zone impact the cultural production of sexual difference? These are the driving questions of “‘Anal” and “Sexual.””

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In her autobiography, Andreas-Salomé makes the striking claim that the field of psychoanalysis could only have been established by a thinker who had ‘achieved a sufficient degree of impartiality (rather than some hard won self-control or a perverse attraction for the disgusting) to confront what was repulsive or offensive’ (1991[1951], p. 96). In her view, the very project of psychoanalysis is made possible through the analyst’s resistance of an unreflexive disgust before so-called ‘repulsive’ and ‘offensive’ aspects of life – a resistance necessary for the production of a more objective view of sexuality. Ironically then, it is only through a defiance of the disgust one is taught to feel about certain bodily activities that psychoanalysis itself can be said to arise.

The psychological genesis of the affect of disgust is central to “‘Anal” and “Sexual.”” The opening pages of the essay trace how a fundamental sense of disgust forms in early age through, first, the shaming of the child for its enjoyment of anal activities, and, second, the education of their sphincter in toilet training, which perpetuates the process of dividing the child from itself by teaching it self-mastery: ‘This first prohibition that we have to assimilate into our sense of self marks, for each of us, the beginning of a meaningful, momentous personal history,’ Andreas-Salomé writes; ‘The obligation to suppress the drive and to practise cleanliness becomes the starting point for acquiring a sense of disgust – disgust as such – which, from now on, will never fade completely, neither from our upbringing nor from the way we live our lives’ (pp. 19–20).

It is worth underlining here that while other psychoanalytical thinkers center their theories of subject-formation on notions such as the castration complex or the mirror stage, Andreas-Salomé locates the emergence of ego not in fear of castration or the moment of visual self-recognition, but in the affective instalment of a fundamental disgust both toward and within the self in the anal stage. For her, it is this ‘first prohibition’ – a suppression of the drive through the parents’ reaction of “‘Ew!” in response to the infant’s excrement – that precipitates the ego divided from itself (p. 19).⁸

8. On the tensions and overlaps between Andreas-Salomé’s theory of subject-formation and French psychoanalytic theory, see Markotic (2001), who points out that Andreas-Salomé’s theory of anality ‘is strikingly similar to [Julia] Kristeva’s elaboration of abjection wherein the child begins to form boundaries and prefigure a self,’ likewise during the anal phase (p. 834).

What are the consequences of this line of argumentation? As Andreas-Salomé emphasizes, the very origins of civilization and culture can be traced to the repression of the anus as an erogenous zone, a discrimination that instigates a great corporeal forgetting of the (anal) sameness beneath (genital) difference. In one of the essay's most cited passages – a passage quoted by Freud in his footnote to the 1920 revision of the *Three Essays* and referred to by Lacan in his seminar on anxiety⁹ – she writes that ‘it is not for nothing that the genital apparatus remains neighbor of the cloaca (and in the case of women is only taken from it on lease’ (p. 28). By this, Andreas-Salomé appears to mean that in the face of the insistence on sexual difference that marks many cultures, the anal and genital areas are not only anatomically contiguous, but function in comparable ways, sharing both an inward profundity as well as a potentially infinite capacity for pleasure. (Thus, she will align female sexuality with the sexuality of ‘anal-erotic types.’) But more than their physiological similarity, what seems to link the anal and genital areas for Andreas-Salomé is the translation of a suppressed anal drive into a genital drive: ‘like the anal urge, which was uncontrollable at first,’ she writes, ‘the genital urge appears as an involuntary force overwhelming the ego’ (p. 28).

Andreas-Salomé's de-essentializing and de-pathologized approach to the question of anal sexuality finds a compelling analogue in more recent, psycho-analytically informed queer theory, wherein the stability of such notions as sexual identity and sexual difference have likewise been problematized. For her, anal sexuality does not disappear when genital sexuality emerges as the legitimate site of sexual activity.¹⁰ Rather, the ‘taint [*Makel!*’] (p. 24) of anal sexuality continues to mark a person throughout their adult life, calling forth the continued possibility of the dissolution of the ego-drive and of consciousness in orgasm – something that Andreas-Salomé poetically describes through the image of a ‘beloved corpse’ appearing at the moment of sexual climax (p. 30). Genital sexuality, she writes in this compelling passage,

retains something of that early, forgotten, anal-erotic corporeality which we had learned to reject as something dead, something not us, excrement – and before which, at the

9. Lacan obliquely refers to the thinking of ‘an analyst, and one of the feminine sex’ in his discussion of the jouissance of women in Seminar X. As Lacan writes there, ‘that the locus of this jouissance is not linked to the enigmatic, unplaceable character of her orgasm, is what our analyses have pushed quite far enough to be able to say that this locus is a point that is archaic enough to precede the present partitioning of the cloaca. This was perfectly marked out, from a certain analytic perspective, by an analyst, and one of the feminine sex’ (Lacan, 2014, p. 265). While Lacan attributes this deeper capacity for jouissance to the female body only, Andreas-Salomé is notably less interested to establish a fundamental difference between ‘man’ and ‘woman’ in her emphasis of the shared capacity for anal pleasure of both sexes.

10. An attempt to make sense of the split between anal and genital drives has likewise marked the trajectory of recent work in Lacanian theory, from Joan Copjec's *Read My Desire: Lacan Against the Historicists* (1994) to Lee Edelman's *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (2004) and Alenka Zupančič's *What Is Sex?* (2017).

moment of loving ecstasy, and perhaps especially at such a moment, we again stand, as if in some dark memory, as before some piece of life that has been withdrawn from us – as before a ‘beloved corpse.’ (p. 30)¹¹

For her, anal eroticism reappears in ecstatic moments that temporarily shatter the boundary between self and world, ‘dissolving the ego’ and ‘paralyzing self-consciousness’ (p. 28). Along similar lines, in *The Freudian Body* (1986, p. 38) Leo Bersani has theorized the sexual drive as ‘that which is intolerable to the structured self,’ an intractable force that dissolves the ego’s capacity to erect a definite boundary between consciousness and the world (or between subject and object). Building on this theory, in his later book *Homos* (1995) he proposes a view of sexuality beyond ‘an oppressive psychology of desire as lack’ and toward ‘a notion of difference not as a trauma to be overcome (a view that, among other things, nourishes antagonistic relations between the sexes), but rather as a nonthreatening supplement of sameness’ (p. 7). Andreas-Salomé is, in our view, the first psychoanalytic thinker to put forth this view of the sexual in terms of a fundamental corporeal sameness that must be erased in order for the regime of sexual difference to be established. It is as if what generates the ego is an inability to tolerate the sameness the anus embodies – a sameness that must be repressed in order to generate infinite difference.¹²

At stake in the process of ‘progression’ from the anal stage is not only the establishment of sexual difference, but the institution of an ontological difference between the human and the nonhuman. Where the human will be affirmed as conscious, civilized, and clean, the nonhuman will be cast variously as instinctual, primitive, and dirty. At the heart of the excision of the human from the nonhuman, Andreas-Salomé shows, lies the sense of disgust, and eventually also hate, that we are taught to feel about that which we have – both physically and symbolically – expelled. Andreas-Salomé’s point here is slightly different from that of Freud in *Civilisation and its Discontents* (1930), wherein civilization emerges through the separation of the human body from the rest of nature and through the erection of a solid boundary between the ego and the id. For her, we become human by discriminating against a part of ourselves that becomes *symbolically* representative of what we are not. ‘The closer to completion our education with regard to the anal comes practically speaking,’ she writes, ‘the more it takes on a quasi-symbolic function. It must ineluctably – despite its representational association with blackness [*Schwärze*] – be rendered harmless as a drive’ (p. 24). By this she

11. In her earlier text *Die Erotik* Andreas-Salomé paints a similar scene, describing how in the height of their sexual throes two young lovers feel the ‘presence of a third, a stranger, their bodies like a kind of fragmented person’ (p. 19, translation ours). Significantly, the young couple does not experience a two-in-oneness, but rather feel the presence of a shadowy third which disrupts their misguided attempt to ‘express the totality of their selves’ (p. 18).

12. For a recent reading of Andreas-Salomé’s theory of anal sexuality within the framework of queer and feminist theory, see Brillmyer et al. (2019).

means that in order for the sexual drive to migrate to the more ‘appropriate’ area of the genitals, the reality of this area of our body as an erogenous zone must be deactivated, and the anus must take on more allegorical meanings: alien, inhuman, black.

Scholars working at the intersection of psychoanalytic theory and Black studies have shown how Black subjects have been particularly dehumanized in the western cultural imaginary through its association with dirt, shit, and death, engendering what David Marriott has described as a ‘dangerous split in black identity between black abjection and white superegoic ideal’ (2007, p. 215).¹³ In her essay ‘Black Anality,’ for example, Jennifer Nash observes such a split in pornography in which the black female anus is represented as site of access for white men and other voyeurs to ‘filthy spaces’ like the ghetto (2014, p. 441). While such videos might be expected to emphasize black difference, however, Nash argues that they ‘reveal not the “secret” of black interiority but a kind of profound corporeal sameness, a sameness that is all the more surprising because it is laid bare in a genre that incessantly promises the distinctiveness of black bodies’ (p. 452). Andreas-Salomé’s essay neither promises nor desires an overcoming of (racial or sexual) difference through attention to the anus. Nor does it call into question the cultural mechanisms through which Blackness in particular becomes linked to anality. At the same time, its critique of those narratives of ‘development’ founded upon a hierarchy of anal and sexual offers a compelling framework for understanding the mechanisms through which a ‘white superegoic ideal’ is installed in and through the production of a ‘black abjection’ symbolically tied to the anal.

‘In approaching the anal,’ Andreas-Salomé proposes, ‘the object of our analysis is twofold: as a reality and a symbol’ (p. 24). This is because, although the anus is a corporeal ‘reality,’ it becomes a ‘symbol’ for ‘everything that is to be repudiated, everything that is discharged and must be eliminated from life’ (p. 24). This happens through education and training, as ‘anal matter’ is transformed from a physical part of us to a metaphor for all that which ‘we’ are not, all that which is ‘alien’ to us – the ‘shit’ that must be repressed in order for ‘us’ to come to the world. Following Andreas-Salomé, one might say that the formation of subjectivity itself – and with it sexual and racial difference – depends on this collapse of anality into an ‘object-as-metaphor,’ the consolidation of the anus, from human infancy on, into an ‘iconic image of impurity’ (p. 24). Pushing her logic yet further, one might venture that those who have become ‘stained’ with death through association with anality are the victims of a tropological transubstantiation initiated in the anal stage, the stage in which disgust ‘becomes the true mark of a life which – as human life – must distinguish life and death within itself’ (p. 27).

13. On the various relations between Blackness and anality, see also Scott (2010) and Stockton (2006).

In its insistence that our ‘anal education’ is the breeding ground for contempt of something that was once us, but which we must expel, “‘Anal” and “Sexual”” warns of the fatal side effects of such symbolization (p. 27). – the dangers of erecting our social and cultural values on something which has no intrinsic value in itself. ‘What if?’ is not a question that psychoanalysis, with its emphasis on acceptance and healing, traditionally asks. Like a ‘beloved corpse,’ however, the otherwise of the prohibition on anal pleasure – a prohibition that, precisely because it is never fully completed, lives on in so many metaphors – haunts the pages of Andreas-Salomé’s text.

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ABSTRACT

This introduction contextualizes Lou Andreas-Salomé's 1916 essay "'Anal' and 'Sexual'" within early psychoanalytic debates about anal sexuality, narcissism, and subject-formation, and gestures toward its relevance for recent thinking in queer theory and critical race studies. While Andreas-Salomé's work has often been read as a gloss to Freud's sexual theory, we emphasize the originality of her contributions to psychoanalytic discourse. Not only did "'Anal' and 'Sexual'" impact Freud's understanding of the long-lasting influence of anal repression on the psyche, but it anticipates the concerns of more recent theorists with how subjects are gendered and racialized through processes of corporeal symbolization.

Keywords: anal stage, anality, Andreas-Salomé, disgust, Freud, queer theory, subject-formation